

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

## CEREAL HARVEST FORECAST, 1946-47.

WHEAT	2,445,000 Acres	28,150,000 Bushels	Average	11.51 Bushels.
BARLEY	490,000 "	8,100,000 "	"	16.53 "

Reports on their harvest prospects have been received from 2,703 farmers in those districts which were not so badly affected by the dry season, and general reports only were received from the other districts. Farmers reports represented nearly 40% of the area sown.

ACREAGES: - The following table shows the total areas under wheat, barley and oats for all purposes, i.e. for grain, hay or green fodder for 1930-31 and several later years. It shows also the areas that farmers had intended to sow for season 1946-47 and the areas now estimated to have been sown. This latter area is subdivided under the respective headings of grain, hay and green fodder with comparative figures shown for 1945-46. An additional line shows the areas that are estimated to have failed entirely or were fit only for grazing. These areas have been apportioned between the grain and green fodder areas according to the purpose for which it was estimated they were sown.

		Wheat Acres	Barley Acres	Oats Acres	Total Acres
Total area sown	1930-31	4,507,213	267,369	519,300	5,293,882
	1939-40	2,948,110	558,559	834,793	4,341,462
	1943-44	1,675,778	304,382	563,565	2,543,725
	1944-45	1,850,682	402,700	664,436	2,917,818
	1945-46	2,407,253	479,384	686,128	3,572,765
Area intended for	1946-47	2,700,000	550,000	600,000	3,850,000
Now estimated for	1946-47	2,600,000	515,000	480,000	3,595,000
For Grain	(a) 1946-47	2,445,000	490,000	260,000	3,195,000
	1945-46	2,165,004	441,830	369,733	2,976,567
For Hay	1946-47	145,000	5,000	160,000	310,000
	1945-46	234,170	6,198	211,361	441,729
Green Fodder	(a) 1946-47	10,000	20,000	60,000	90,000
	1945-46	18,079	31,356	105,034	154,469
(a) Failed areas included		125,000	10,000	40,000	175,000

Although the areas sown with wheat decreased practically continuously from 1930-31 (the maximum year) to 1943-44, barley and oats increased until 1939-40 after which they also decreased to 1943-44. Although the areas under wheat decreased from 1930-31 to 1943-44, during the same period the number of sheep increased from 5,980,959 to 10,359,669 and cattle from 218,985 to 414,997, while there were increased plantings of flax, peas, vegetables, barley, oats, etc.

After the fall in acreage to 1943-44, there were fairly substantial increases in the areas sown to wheat barley and oats for 1944-45 and 1945-46 and during those years there were decreases in livestock - principally due to drought losses. The 1946-47 seeding season was propitious and compared with the areas intended it is estimated that there were only slightly decreased areas for wheat and barley but there was a larger decrease in the area for oats, largely due to the fact that less was sown for green feed because there was good growth of natural feed.

RAINFALL etc. 1946 was an abnormal season from the viewpoint of rainfall. During January to March, which three months are prior to the generally understood cereal-growing season, the average rainfall for the agricultural areas was 749 points compared with the 41 years' mean of only 201. The next three months were below the mean with

370 (462), July was above with 258 (191), and August to October were considerably below with 251 (481), while November was above again with 131 (96) points. The total for the period April to October was only 879 (1134) while for April to November it was 1010 (1230) points.

The dry period from April to October had a gradually deteriorating effect on the crops and reduced the prospective yields by many million bushels. The heavier rainfall in November was too late to benefit the crops, especially as the rains were counterbalanced by occasional severe hot North winds. There was also extensive damage by rust in some districts and there were grasshoppers in the Northern areas.

Four consecutive seasons have been below the 41 years' mean of 1230 points for the April-November period, viz. 1943 - 1068, 1944 - 884, 1945 - 1122, and 1946 - 1010 points. In fact, the mean for the last 7 seasons has been only 1088 compared with the mean of 1253 points for the 35 years preceding.

Compared with the 41 years' mean, the Divisional Totals for 1946 were Central 1292 (1569), Lower North 978 (1189), Upper North 570 (843), South Eastern 1567 (1916), Western 946 (1077) and Murray Mallee 800 (1006) points.

The estimated average wheat yields per acre for 1946-47 compared with the means for the 41 years are Central 15.86 (13.45) Lower North 15.54 (14.53), Upper North 10.08 (9.35), South Eastern 18.20 (13.94), Western 8.30 (7.30), Murray Mallee 7.39 (7.27) and state 11.51 (10.68) bushels.

WHEAT:- The estimated yield of 28,150,000 bushels of wheat compares with 21,033,841 in 1945-46 and with an average of 29,923,882 during the previous 10 years. The estimated yield per acre is 11.51 bushels compared with 9.72 in 1945-46. Earlier in the season prospects were for a yield of several million bushels higher than that now estimated but the crops deteriorated because of the dry spring, rust, wind and frost.

BARLEY:- The estimated yield is 8,100,000 bushels compared with 7,566,145 in 1945-46 and the ten years' mean of 7,447,313. The average per acre is 16.53 compared with 17.12 in 1945-46. Prior to the severe winds on the 22nd November, it had been thought that the previous record yield of 11,714,002 bushels might be exceeded.

OATS:- It is always difficult to estimate the yield of oats and it has been particularly so this year because of the probable losses through shattering from the recent severe winds, but the total expected yield is 2,650,000 bushels compared with 3,178,450 in 1945-46 and the 10 years' mean of 3,020,473. The average per acre is 10.19 compared with 8.60 in 1945-46.

HAY:- It is estimated that the acreage cut for hay was:- wheaten 145,000, barley 5,000 and oaten 160,000, a total of 310,000 acres compared with 441,729 the previous season. The estimated yields are wheaten 190,000, barley 5,000 and oaten 190,000 a total of 385,000 tons compared with 460,045 the previous season. These figures exclude Meadow, lucerne, etc. hay which usually amount to upwards of 50,000 tons.

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